

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached drawing sheet includes new FIG. 8. The figure has been added to more clearly illustrate the joints of the toothbrush. Support for this figure can be found throughout the specification, in particular on page 5, lines 2-19. No new matter has been added.

Attachment: New Sheet

REMARKS

These remarks are responsive to the non-final Office Action of May 30, 2006. Claims 1 and 6 have been amended. The amendments to the claims are fully supported by the specification, claims, and drawings of the application as originally filed, and entry thereof is respectfully requested. No new matter has been added. Claims 1-18 remain pending in this application for examination. Allowance of the application is respectfully requested.

Drawing Objections

The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a) for failing to show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. With respect to the features of claim 1, claim 1, as amended, recites, "...each of said support members mounted against and connected to the outer surface of a peripheral wall of said frame at a set of said joints, said frame extending inwardly from the peripheral wall toward the open central area below said support members..." Figures 1 and 7 clearly illustrate the support members being disposed on top of the frame and the peripheral wall of the frame. The frame of Figures 1 and 7 clearly extends inwardly, from the peripheral wall to the open central area, in order for the support members to have the overlap shown in the figures.

Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of this objection.

With respect to claims 2 and 11, Figure 8 has been added to more clearly depict the head of the toothbrush. Joints 18 are clearly visible as slots positioned along the head of the toothbrush. These slots correspond to the positions of the lateral support members. Support for this figure may be found throughout the specification, particularly on page 5, lines 2-19. No new matter has been added. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of this objection.

With respect to claims 5 and 6, claim 6 has been amended to more clearly recite the feature. As amended, claim 6 recites a toothbrush "wherein said laser beam absorbing portion is positioned at an interior portion of said plate." Figure 4 clearly illustrates the laser absorbing portion 28 positioned within an interior portion of the plate 20. Applicant respectfully traverses this objection.

With respect to claim 15, Figures 4 clearly illustrates a base member (plate 20) with integral strands (bristles 22). Further, Figure 6 also illustrates a base member 42 with integral strands 22. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully traverses this objection.

With respect to claim 17, the base member 42 of Figure 6 is clearly a string arrangement. The generally circular cross section clearly illustrates a string-type base member. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully traverses this objection.

With respect to claim 18, Figure 6 clearly illustrates joints 44 that comprise an arcuate seat. Figure 6 clearly illustrates the arcuate seat 44, as well as the base member having a corresponding cross section. In addition, Figure 6 illustrates the base member 42 seated in the arcuate seat. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully traverses this objection.

The drawings have also been objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(4) because reference character "18" has been used to designate both joints and plates. The specification identified the reference numeral for the plates in one paragraph. The paragraph has been amended to include the correct reference number for the plates. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of this objection.

Claims

Claims 1, 3-4, 8-9, 12, 15 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,500,939 to Gueret (hereinafter "Gueret"). Claims 1, 2 and 8-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,836,036 to Ivory (hereinafter "Ivory") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,779,851 to Bouchiere (hereinafter "Bouchiere"). Claims 3-7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ivory in view of Bouchiere and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,045,649 to Weihrauch (hereinafter "Weihrauch"). Claims 13-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ivory in view of Bouchiere and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,219,874 to van Gelder (hereinafter "van Gelder"). Claims 15-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ivory in view of Bouchiere and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,088,870 to Hohlbein (hereinafter "Hohlbein").

Independent Claim 1 is Allowable

Independent claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by Gueret and under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ivory in view of Bouchiere. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Amended claim 1 recites, among other features:

...a peripheral frame having an open central area... a plurality of generally thin support members, cleaning elements secured to and extending outwardly from said support members along the length of said support members, each of said support members mounted against and connected to the outer surface of the peripheral wall of said frame at a set of said joints, said peripheral wall extending inwardly below said support members, each of said support members being disposed transversely and laterally across said open area of said frame, the lateral support members being generally perpendicular to the transverse support members and the lateral support members being spaced equidistant to each other and the transverse support members being spaced equidistant to each other, and said support members spanning said open area of said frame outwardly of said peripheral wall...

Applicant respectfully asserts that neither Gueret nor Ivory and Bouchiere teach or suggest lateral and transverse support members that are generally perpendicular and spaced equidistant from each other. Rather, Gueret describes a hair brush having an oval perforated base plate. Col. 4, lines 9-11. The plate is formed by a plurality of ribs extending between a central oval-shaped element and the oval-shaped base plate. Col. 4, lines 11-14. Between the oval-shaped central element and the oval-shaped base plate are situated a plurality of oval shaped elements disposed concentrically around the central oval-shaped element. Col. 2, lines 14-20. Clearly, the concentric ribs of Gueret are not a plurality of support members disposed laterally and transversely across the open area of the frame, wherein the lateral and transverse support members are generally perpendicular to each other.

Further, Ivory describes a toothbrush having longitudinal extending elements that have offset distal end portions that intersect transverse elements. Col. 2, lines 4-7. Figure 1 of Ivory clearly illustrates the pattern of intersecting support rails. Ivory fails to teach or suggest lateral and transverse support members that are generally

perpendicular to each other and spaced equidistant from each other.

The addition of Bouchiere fails to cure the deficiencies of Ivory. Bouchiere describes a toothbrush having a recessed formed in the head into which a carrier plate is inserted. Col. 2, lines 41-43. The carrier plate has a number of through holes having tufts of bristles inserted and fastened therein. Bouchiere does not teach or suggest the use of lateral and transverse support members for holding bristles. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully asserts that independent claim 1 is allowable and withdrawal of the rejection of these claims is respectfully requested.

Dependent Claims are Allowable

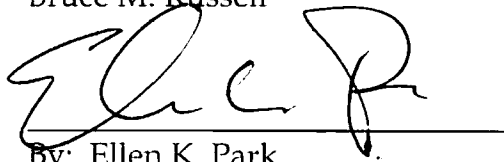
Dependent claims 2-18 depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 1, and are thus allowable over the cited art in view of the arguments set forth above and further in view of the additional inventive features recited therein. The addition of Weihrauch, van Gelder or Hohlbein fails to cure the deficiencies of Gueret or Ivory and Bouchiere. Accordingly, Applicant asserts that claims 2-18 are allowable and withdrawal of the rejection of these claims over the cited references is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

It is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. If any additional fees are required or if an overpayment has been made, the Commissioner is authorized to charge or credit Deposit Account No. 03-2455.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'EKP', written over a horizontal line.

Date: October 2, 2006

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